

# THE macdonald JOURNAL

NOVEMBER 1976

Volume 16 Number 11 NOV 16 1976



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# **ANNUAL MEETING QUEBEC FARMERS' ASSOCIATION**

**YOU ARE CORDIALLY INVITED TO ATTEND  
THE QUEBEC FARMERS' ASSOCIATION  
ANNUAL MEETING**

***GUEST SPEAKER***  
**CHARLES MUNRO, President**

CANADIAN FEDERATION OF AGRICULTURE

2 p.m.

followed by a QUESTION & ANSWER PERIOD



**CHARLES MUNRO**

**THE DATE:** WEDNESDAY, NOVEMBER 10, 1976

**THE TIME:** 10:00 a.m. registration

**THE PLACE:** Centennial Centre, Macdonald College, Ste. Anne de Bellevue

Feel welcome to attend all or any part of the program which might interest you.

For more information . . . call Macdonald College (514) 457-6580 — local 228

# THE macdonald JOURNAL

NOVEMBER 1976

Macdonald Journal  
Volume 37, No. 11  
November, 1976

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## In This Issue

### Cover:

Macdonald College was the site in late September for the Canadian and Provincial Plowing Matches. Our cover shows Canadian National Plowing Champion Ken Brown from Richmond Hill, Ontario. See photos page 8.

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## Journal Jottings

Ideally, I would like to have asked about six dairy farmers and six "experts" upon whom they partly rely for their livelihood to come in, sit around a table and discuss this past summer of discontent. Not only to talk about what happened but also to reflect upon the future for the individual farmer and for the industry as a whole. I think I did the next best thing by asking three of our Macdonald staff members to discuss the situation. You'll find their comments in "The Dairy Industry . . . The Controversy Continues" in this issue. It has been difficult to even get this piece typed and ready for the printers — each of the three gentlemen still wants a last chance for rebuttal, and I have

had to finally suggest that the article go as is and further discussion can take place under a "Letters to the Editor" section in a future issue.

When an event such as the recent Canadian and Provincial Plowing Matches, which were held at Macdonald College in conjunction with the Fall Royal, covers a time period of three days and an area including several buildings and acres of land, it is somewhat difficult to always have a camera at the right place at the right time. We think, however, that our photographer, undergraduate student André Virly, covered the territory very well. A selection of his photos may be found on page 8. With André taking photos for the Journal, I was able to spend a

good part of my time in the QFA-QWI tent — a wise move considering the weather for it was close to the coffee urns and thus a popular stopping off spot for passersby. It was a busy but fun time, and I did enjoy meeting and chatting with so many of our readers. And when they weren't talking about the weather or ploughing, more often than not the subject was dairying!

Hazel M. Clarke

Last month I wrote about the necessity of agriculture standing up and telling its side of the story. With big industry, big government, and big urban interests all competing with one another to catch the consumers' and voters' ear, it becomes increasingly important, and increasingly difficult, for farmers and others in agriculture to get their interests heard and considered.

But just how does one go about doing this? When you hear someone publicly make a statement about agriculture that you know is untrue or misleading, what can you do about it? All too often we have a tendency to just gripe among ourselves and those who already agree with us. But this just doesn't get to those who made the statement and who really need the informing and convincing. To do this we need to put in a little more time and effort if we are really serious about correcting a wrong statement. One of the most effective ways to do this is to write a personal letter.

One thing that businessmen and politicians agree upon is that one letter is often given as much consideration as a hundred opinion interviews. They feel that if a person is concerned enough to take the time and trouble to write a letter, there are probably a hundred more people

who are just as concerned and feel the same way but who do not take the time to write.

If you feel strong enough about farming and agriculture to respond to some of the false and misleading statements and accusations made against it, here are some rules and ideas to guide you in your letter writing. They are not hard and fast rules, but they have proved themselves effective to others who have written to editors, TV commentators, union leaders, politicians, businessmen, and others.

- Keep your letter brief. One page is usually enough. Cut your argument back to the bare essentials instead of rambling on about all your gripes.
- Stick to one issue at a time. Don't try to justify all the farmers' problems in one letter. Be specific by restricting yourself to only one issue per letter. You can always write a second letter for other issues.
- Be factual. This is most important. Facts that you can back up with information sources are much more effective than personal opinions based on your emotions.
- Be polite. Don't antagonize or insult, or your reader will just dismiss your letter as another "crank letter".

- Respond quickly. Don't wait weeks or months or else the person won't remember what he said. If you put off writing a letter, it probably won't get written.
- Personalize your letter. Stick to the facts, but try to give a personal experience of how this issue has affected you.
- Send your letter to a specific person rather than just to the company or organization.
- It costs only 50 cents to send a certified or special delivery letter. These often have a stronger effect on the reader and may be worth the cost if you feel strongly enough about the issue.
- Sign the letter. Anonymous letters are usually associated with crank letters and don't receive considerations. Editors will usually honour your request not to use your name.

If every farm family took the time to write one letter a year on behalf of agriculture, we probably wouldn't hear or read as many statements that are giving urban consumers misleading ideas about farmers and farming.

Gordon Bachman

## The Controversy Continues

The Journal would like to thank Norman Campbell, Manager of the Dairy Herd Analysis Service, Rudi Dallenbach, Director of the Macdonald College Farm, and Douglas Mutch, Lecturer in the Department of Agricultural Economics for the following article.

### Why the Current Crisis?

**Douglas Mutch:** The basic problem, as I see it, in the dairy industry is the same as in the egg industry and others where the Canadian and provincial governments have decided to institute a marketing board set up for selling products. If they are going to guarantee prices to the farmer, they also have to use supply management, which means setting quotas and production levels. It is very difficult at any time to determine exactly what the market demand and supply will be, and this has resulted in the current situation of surplus production.

Farmers have had to cut back production after being told not too long ago by the government to increase production. Naturally, they are very unhappy about it; they are getting penalized and, although part of the problem is the difficulties in supply management itself, I tend to think that the decision to go with marketing boards is very possibly wrong. The dairy industry would be better off if perhaps a cooperative system were instituted. At least get away from the government quota system.

**Norman Campbell:** I see the situation pretty much the same way. My own basic philosophy is away from government intervention in most marketing systems. We have a severe problem in the egg industry that has led to some in-

efficient production and some extremely inefficient marketing, and I think the same thing is happening in the dairy industry. It is a very difficult industry to regulate with production quotas. Because of variables such as weather, crop yields, feed prices, etc., markets, particularly international markets, change quickly and are difficult to predict and I believe government agencies whether in production or marketing are too cumbersome and react much too slowly to adapt to these changes.

**Rudi Dallenbach:** It is too simplistic to say that supply management and marketing boards alone are at fault. We have to go further back. We had years of plenty and then we had those two years — 1972-73 — when we had a real shortage of food in the world and it was politically sound to advocate an increase in food production. Not just political in the sense of politics in Ottawa — it was just the thing to do.

That was the first time that the farmer felt that he was on top of the world. He had a fairly decent price for milk, which probably goes back to the pricing policies our government has which really doesn't have too much to do with supply management but rather with the cost of production. The Canadian farmer has a tremendous potential to produce and he did. The same thing happened in Europe where they had a four to five per cent increase in milk production, and that certainly had nothing to do with supply management.

There is a combination of factors involved: the whole world was geared for increased food production; we had two exceptionally good summers where we couldn't

shut the cows off; the slump in beef meant we couldn't market our surplus dairy cattle without a great loss and therefore many of these animals stayed in the herd and kept on production and, finally, there was the whole involvement of government information services such as the Dairy Herd Analysis Service. Everything encouraged increased production.

Who do we blame in this whole game? It is very difficult to blame one particular person for making the wrong decisions. I am not saying that I am in favour of supply management. We ship something like 79 per cent of our milk through the co-operative movement in Quebec. Maybe that is the solution, but whatever we call it — federally controlled, provincially controlled, or controlled by cooperatives — there is some kind of control or management of supply. We would have to have a national cooperative. What's the function really? A system to control supply to assure the farmer a price for his product which allows him to continue farming. It's to give some direction to production, some direction to stabilize the income of the farmer.

**Norman Campbell:** Let's go back to surplus production, and you certainly put your finger on two of the very solid reasons why. We had a great year for feed, forages, and grains, and the low beef price discouraged farmers from culling cows. But I feel that the factor that still had the most influence is that the price of milk to the farm was set somewhat high. Artificially high in that when establishing that price I think a bit of foresight could have told us that this amazing capacity to produce in this country was going

to get turned on as soon as we started paying what we did for milk. Possibly people were getting paid a little too high and there was too much encouragement to produce too much.

**Rudi Dallenbach:** I have to disagree. A farmer has to have an income of \$xx. He milks x number of cows in order to achieve that figure. If you give him more money, he is not necessarily going to put it into more cows. But right now he still would like to make that \$xx and the only way he can, if you lower the price, is by producing more milk. Therefore, it would not be a bad idea to pay more for milk — say \$12 — but control production. Many farmers are in a real pinch because they borrowed money. Every month as much as 20 per cent of their milk cheque goes to pay off debts.

**Douglas Mutch:** We're talking prices here and saying on the one hand that prices are set rather artificially high for the farmer, but the other side of the equation is what has been happening to milk prices at the retail level. And what has been happening to the offtake of milk? There are two sides to supply management. If retail prices are set a little higher, consumption is going to be even lower. We're talking about one side of the actual production — how much we get off the farm — but where are we going to put it? It's about time we developed a food policy. Canadian farmers basically have the capacity to over-produce any product. It looks as if we are heading for another kind of food crisis where we are going to have too much of everything. If we had cooperatives managed by the farmers, they would have no one to blame but themselves. There are still going to be mistakes

made but at least it would be the farmers making them and reacting to them. If they can make the hard decisions themselves rather than have the government seemingly arbitrarily doing it, they are going to be a lot better able to understand and adjust to changing market conditions.

The beef cattle industry is still in a depression period. The producers are managing to solve a lot of their own problems. The whole European community has a large agricultural program right now that is leading them down the same road that we're heading into in Canada. The best thing that has happened in European agriculture in the last two years is the drought that they have had. That stopped them from having these large unmanageable surpluses that are bound to come.

**Rudi Dallenbach:** Can we really ask farmers to make international marketing decisions themselves? They need help from people like yourself. It's impossible when you're sitting out near a little village somewhere, running your 30-cow farm to be able to make a decision that affects not just yourself but the whole world situation. A farmer does not always have the facts — he has to seek expertise. The expertise could be his co-op, or could be government.

**Douglas Mutch:** There is one major problem with government expertise in that they're not dependent on their expertise. If you're hired by a co-op, it does directly depend on your expertise, and you are more likely to get better people. People who are talking directly to farmers, who are aware of what is happening, and who are looking at the food situation in a global context.

**Norman Campbell:** Rudi says that the farmer is unable or unequipped with facts to make world marketing decisions because there are too many factors entering into this decision. And I think that the more the state gets involved in the production of any of these commodities the tougher a management decision it becomes for a farmer to make. People in the farming business are making sound business decisions based on a common sense approach to problems every day of the week. Whether to buy a piece of machinery, whether to cull cows, buy cows, etc. If dairy products were marketed like beef in the country, which tends to find its own level based on the law of supply and demand, I think that most dairy farmers would be able to make sound management decisions. However, there is nothing more unpredictable than government policy; it's worse than the weather.

### The Top 20 Per Cent

**Rudi Dallenbach:** I would say that the top 20 per cent of the dairy farmers were not hurt that much, because they have gone through similar periods a number of times in the last 50 years. It's part of farming. The other 80 per cent are the ones who quite often are in farm organizations that wield a lot of power and, in many instances, have helped to create the situation that we are in. They are the ones who ask for higher milk prices. I know farmers who are milking 100 to 120 cows who say we don't need that price. It hurt the 80 per cent, and they have taken some drastic measures which are going to hurt them in the long run. They have cut their inputs where they can cut them the most drastically in the shortest period of time.

For instance, they cut grain feeding. The other 20 per cent did what they have been doing all along. The minute they get into a situation like this they consolidate their farm business affairs. They tighten up on all the management practices but not on the productive capability of their farm. That is the last place where you tighten up. They are always going to have their farm and animals in a situation where they are going to be sound, because they know that this is only going to last for a certain period and then things start improving.

**Douglas Mutch:** I like your split of 20 per cent of the farmers who manage to make it through both the good and bad cycles without any major problems. Where did some of these other farmers come from? How much is the government encouraging these less efficient producers into the system? Supply management is operated in such a way to give a price to the producer that will cover the cost of the less efficient 80 per cent or the bottom 20 per cent, or whatever. Perhaps there are people in the dairy industry who should not be there in the first place.

**Norman Campbell:** I'm not quite sure what criteria you're using to define the top 20 per cent but those I consider the top 20 per cent are adversely affected. There are a lot of young 25-to 35-year-old farmers with over \$100,000 of outstanding farm credit. Most of them are our top 20 per cent, and they are hurting.

**Rudi Dallenbach:** The biggest majority of dairy farmers are well established 45-to 50-year-old men who are probably the second or third generation on the farm.

**Norman Campbell:** We have so

many people in dairying at an advanced age that I think we have to give more consideration to the young people in the business.

**Douglas Mutch:** They are hurting now, but it will be a good learning experience for the ones that manage to live through this period. The ones that survive this are the ones that are going to be in the top 20 per cent 15 to 20 years from now. Dairy producers who are able to weather current problems will remember these times if and/or when the situation improves. The same sort of thing is going to happen to the pork industry. A lot of money was lent out to young people to get into pork in 1975 when prices were high. Though still relatively high, they are on the way down. Pork production is on the increase. If one looked at pork prices over the last 70 to 75 years, they would see that we were at the high point of a four-year cycle when everyone was getting in and this has happened time and time again. The major difference now is the government money that is available to pour into the farming system at the wrong point in time. Rather than encouraging new pork producers two years ago, they should have been told "Hey, look out, prices are at their peak and are due to drop." And the same thing should have happened with dairy.

#### What Happens Now?

**Douglas Mutch:** One thing that is going to help is that feed prices are going to drop even farther. Canada is going to have a lot of trouble selling its grain, and the United States has a lot of feed, so that should help somewhat.

**Norman Campbell:** You can sit

down with an individual dairy farmer and prove pretty conclusively on a piece of paper that the last thing he should do is to stop feeding grain. There is an opportunity to cull out a lot of his low producers and to cull heavily. But the farmer's reaction may be a little bit different. First his reaction to cut back is to reduce the amount of money he is putting out—cut down on cash flow. So programs that should be considered valuable to him are going, feed is going, particularly if he is buying it off the farm. Some farmers have gone off the DHAS program, which I consider is a mistake. In times of low returns for milk, a person needs a milk recording program more than he needs it in times of good prices.

I think we are going to have a lot of problems this fall and winter with herd health. Those who have cut back meal feeding are going to have some cows that are probably in poor condition because of under feeding during production or even during the dry period. I think the fellow who stopped feeding meal will realize it was a mistake. I even know people who are getting away from A.I., which is probably about as ridiculous as one can get. They're using some unidentified bull rather than pay A.I. fees.

Since April our average herd on DHAS has gone from 37.2 to about 35.2 cows. That's not much of a reduction, and I'm not even convinced that those two cows have gone out of the herd. The farmer has cut off meal feeding. The cow has gone dry at probably five or six months, and he's had her on pasture. Why? Because he is saying there is going to be a milk shortage in about four

months, and I'm not going to get stuck again going out and buying heifers at high prices.

### Surplus Production

**Rudi Dallenbach:** Isn't it time to have a food policy where we are going to decide to have sufficient food in the world. Doug, you say that we are heading toward a surplus situation similar to the 60s. We might have a drought next summer on the North American continent, and that's all it takes to put us into a minus situation.

**Douglas Mutch:** Supposedly we had near drought conditions in the U.S. winter wheat belt this year. They were talking of a return to the dust bowl of the 1930s. How did the farmers react? The winter wheat crop was lower so they increased their spring wheat and the United States produced another record crop. If we have a drought next year, say we knock off 25 per cent of the crop, that would be great. We'll get close to what we got this year. If we have good weather, then all hell is going to break loose. They had bad weather in Russia last winter but they got off to an excellent start this year—best conditions ever. Winter wheat has historically produced about twice the yield as their spring wheat. Even though Europe has had two very bad years, they are still not in all that bad a situation. If they have a good season, we're in trouble. India now has a grain surplus—they have a stock-pile of 17 million tons. Even Bangladesh had a surplus. The U.S. has had absolutely no acreage restrictions. Canada will probably let us produce to capacity. We've got record supplies of rice. Australia is in a bit of trouble, but that has very

### What a dairy farmer can do

1. Stay on, or get on a production recording system.
2. Cull low producers, inefficient breeders, mastitic cows, and slow milkers.
3. Follow sound feeding practices, particularly with young heifers.
4. Do not cut recommended grain supplement feeding until a cow has been rebred and pregnancy tested.
5. Supply a maximum amount of nutrients in the form of hay and silages by feeding several times a day.
6. Balance grain rations according to roughage fed. Corn silage, haylage, hay, or a combination of the three.
7. Observe heat periods, particularly carefully in the evening and early morning. Watch your calving interval.
8. Reduce your input costs by shopping around.
9. Be credit wise, use a partial budget before making any changes.
10. Sleep on it a couple of nights before making any major expenditures.

Rudi Dallenbach

little impact on the world situation. Brazil is increasing their soybean crop another 10 per cent this year after a 25 per cent increase last year. Argentina is producing a record grain crop. We had a 40 million metric ton increase in world wheat production this year. I could go on but my point is — what is going to happen if we have a good grain year. If we stockpile food, it would be good in one sense in that it would stabilize prices; it would be bad in the other sense in that it is going to stabilize prices at a very low level. It is too late now for the States and Canada to institute acreage restrictions, but I expect that in the summer of '78 we are going to have them again.

### Consolidation

**Rudi Dallenbach:** That's why it is extremely difficult for a Quebec dairy farmer to make food policy decisions because he has got to take the whole thing into consideration. What does he do now?

As far as I am concerned it boils down to consolidation of his business. He has gone through a period of development. In any business when you have a boon you can develop—you do all the things you can't do otherwise. Now there is a low period of months, maybe a year. The beef farmers are now in their third year of consolidation, and the top beef farmers are still producing beef. It's the inefficient producer who has dropped by the wayside. The others are still in the business, but they haven't bought a new tractor or a new car. One of the tremendous potentials of family farms is the ability to survive these crises—cut out a bit there, slow down a bit here.

It's not just. I don't think it's right that the most important person in the world who can assure peace and can feed us has to go through these kinds of cycles, but this is the lot of the farmer. All he can do is tighten his belt.

**Norman Campbell:** You can argue the morals of this but most of the people who are in farming are in because they choose to be. It has its advantages and disadvantages. A person in farming has to rise and ride with the problems that come with it. But don't you think that the self-regulation that the beef industry has shown us in the last few years is the best argument for governments getting right out of marketing farm products. The beef industry has been in trouble for some time, but they're recovering.

**Rudi Dallenbach:** In many instances a beef producer also grows grain, and the reason he has survived is because he has an alternative. The dairy farmer hasn't got that alternative. I'm all for becoming self-sufficient as far as feed grains in eastern Canada are concerned, but the size of our farms prohibit this for less than about 40 per cent of our dairy farmers. For one thing, the cost of land is prohibitive.

**Douglas Mutch:** the dairy farmer should react to the situation the same way as the beef industry has done—granted the beef industry has more options. Yet the fact is the beef producer is in the process of culling his herd. He is cutting back and he will continue to cut back as long as the outlook for the beef industry is for low prices and over-supply. Beef prices are not going to take off right away, but feed prices are going to drop and I don't think it's too far down the line before the beef industry is back in a profitable situation—not for a matter of a year or two; they are looking far enough ahead right now that the beef industry is going to be relatively

good for possibly the next 10 years.

If the dairy industry is not consolidating right now, perhaps we'll have a slight upturn, perhaps things will begin to look up for the farmer, perhaps there will be a supply shortage for a short period of time, but how long will this last? Especially if there are cows that are ready to come right back into production. If you make cosmetic changes, fine; perhaps things will begin to look better—but for a short term only. The dairy industry needs some long-term solutions.

#### Government Support

**Norman Campbell:** What do you think about the announcement from the provincial government that they are going to inject \$21 million in some form to Quebec dairy producers?

**Douglas Mutch:** That's very nice for the dairy producers now but I wonder how much it is fore-stalling hard decisions.

**Norman Campbell:** I'm in total agreement. I think the dairy producer has to bite the bullet right now and a lot of them have to seriously consider a severe culling program and even in some cases leaving the dairy business.

**Rudi Dallenbach:** Maybe a moratorium on credit payments would be much more acceptable than pouring money into agriculture. Particularly for the young, recently established farmer.

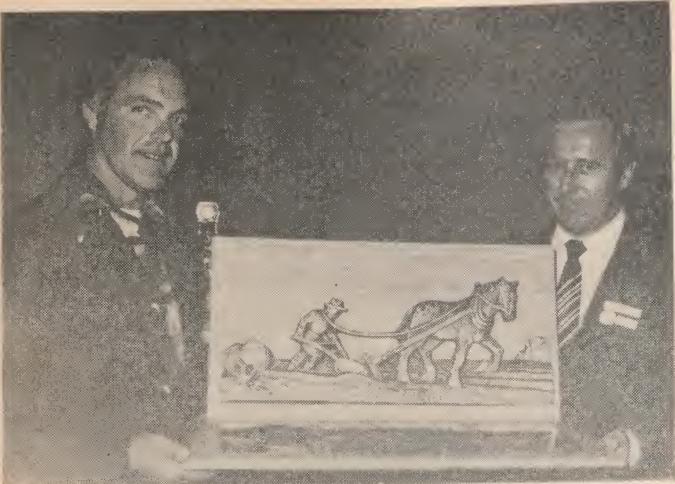
**Douglas Mutch:** We're in basic agreement that the short-term solution for dairy farmers is to consolidate their enterprises. Over the longer term some hard

decisions have to be made. If you are over-producing, you basically have too many people in the industry. The less efficient ones may make it through this period, but then they have to ask themselves, well, what about next time. If you're one of the farmers in the most dire straits, now is the best time to make a long-term decision. Are you willing to sit through something which could be off and on for one, two, five years? Look ahead. What is the outlook for dairy farming? The government very definitely has been given a hard time. They are a very visible entity in the whole system and so it is very easy to blame government, but I think all areas are to blame. The reason I suggest getting into cooperatives is that I think the responsibility should lie basically with the farmer. He should have more say in what is happening and have enough sense to make the tough decisions.

**Norman Campbell:** If we are going to have government involved in the marketing of milk, then to me there is nothing more ludicrous than having a decision on dairy policy announced in the middle of April which is even retroactive to the first of the month. The farmer needs a minimum of four years lead time. By the time you breed a cow to produce a heifer that is going to come on the milking line, you're talking in terms of four or five years. I agree we need long-term planning, but as we have said previously, "it's a very difficult industry to predict."

# MATCH SHOTS

photos by André Virly  
and Gilbert Sauvé



Jean-Charles Marcil from Carignan, Quebec, won the Senior Provincial championship. He is seen here receiving the Esso Trophy from Claude Dansereau.



Studies in concentration: Roland Bouchard of St. Augustin and Herbert Winget of Sherbrooke (see top photo page 9) competed in the Canadian National championships for Quebec.



A panoramic view of the area set aside for parking, farm machinery displays, booths, and tents. The plowing took place in the fields in the background.



As well as following the Plowing activities, visitors have an excellent opportunity to observe the various farm machinery demonstrations.



The College Fall Royal was held in conjunction with the Matches. The students' Woodsman Team displayed their skill for an appreciative audience.



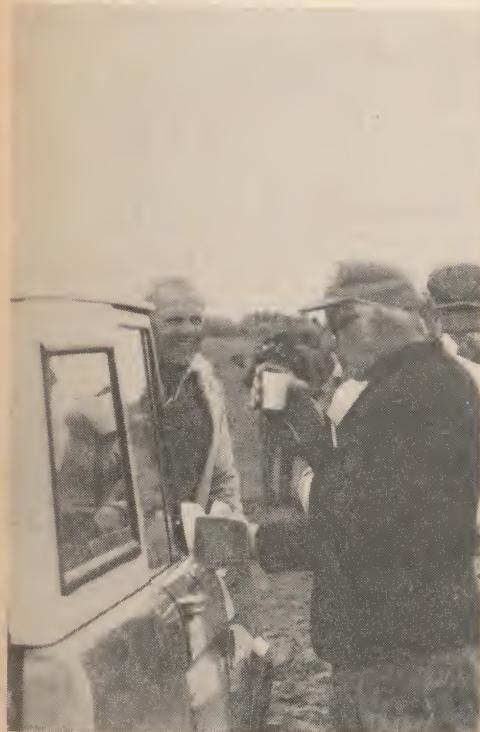
Professor Eric Norris of the Department of Agricultural Engineering and a Director of the Quebec Plowmen's Association gives some pointers to a young plowman. Professor Norris won the Utility Class Match.



Top: Taking a break from manning the booth Quebec Farmers' Association Director, Dennis Keenan and his wife tour the site. Notice they came prepared for the weather! Their daughter Patricia made the colourful banners for the tent shown at the top of page 11.  
Right: Jurgen Kalweit discusses Animal Science at a Fall Royal display.



Members of the Quebec Women's Institutes and the Quebec Farmers' Association were on hand to tell visitors about their organization and — very welcome on those cold wet days — the QWI served coffee and doughnuts.



Farm Director, Rudi Dallenbach, who is also a Director of the Q.P.P.A., chats with Arcade Larivière, who is a Past-President of the Association.



Ken Brown receiving the Molson's Trophy from Roland Fréchette.



Howard Greer, a steward in the Canadian competition, and Erskine Roger, a Director of Q.P.P.A. and a judge, compares notes.



From left to right: Yvon Bruneau of the Quebec Ministry of Agriculture, Machinery Division, Roméo Besner, President Q.P.P.A., and Martin van Lierop, Secretary-Manager Q.P.P.A., pose for photographers at the reception given by Vice-Principal A. C. Blackwood, Macdonald College.

# The Family

# Farm

Published in the interests  
of the farmers of the province  
by the Quebec Department of  
Agriculture.

## After 15 Years of Sustained Effort

### Michel Lemire is Named Winner of the 1976 Agricultural Merit Competition

by Hélène Bellerose

It was at St. Zéphirin, a small farming community in the county of Yamaska in the very heart of one of the best agricultural regions in Quebec, that we met Mr. Michel Lemire, this year's winner of the Agriculture Merit Competition. A man of only 38 years of age, he is well known and respected in farming circles as President of the Granby Agricultural Cooperative and executive member of the Cooperative fédérée du Québec.

Michel Lemire is also a first-class Holstein breeder. In 1975, his herd numbering 100 head of purebred registered Holsteins, (42 milking cows and 57 replacement animals) produced a total of 666,000 pounds of milk or an average of about 15,500 pounds per cow. It should be pointed out that this herd is Mr. Lemire's pride and joy and ranks with the best Holstein herds to be found in the province. The numerous prizes awarded to Mr. Lemire at the Drummondville and Trois-Rivières exhibitions since 1972 are clear proof of the superior quality of his animals.

#### Laborious and humble beginnings

Son of a farmer, Mr. Lemire was born at Baieville in the county of Yamaska in 1937. He is the sixth in a family of 13 children which in 1964 was voted "Farm Family of the Year". It was on the family farm that Michel Lemire started out in agriculture by raising dairy cattle, with a

view to setting up his own farm, and by becoming an active member of the Baieville Young Farmer's Club. In addition, from 1958 to 1960 he headed the Young Rural People's Group ("Assemblée des Jeunes Ruraux").

However, Michel Lemire's real beginnings as a farmer date back to 1961 when his father, Mr. Georges-Henri Lemire bought him a farm at Baieville. This farm had 72 acres under cultivation and a herd of 16 grade Holstein cows and 10 replacement cattle (young cows and heifers) whose average yield was 8,000 pounds of milk per cow, with B.C.A. ratings of +3.2 for milk and +3.2 for fat.

It was on this farm that the future gold medalist, ably backed by his wife, née Lise Desruisseaux, started to improve his herd by buying two purebred Holstein cows in 1963. Since then, as Mr. Lemire points out, "Good management has been the key to success."

Soon, by 1966, the Baieville farm had become too small for Mr. and Mrs. Lemire and their four children. Unable to expand on his land, Michel Lemire was obliged to sell and buy "Micheret", his present farm at St. Zéphirin in Yamaska. The total area of Micheret was and still is 178.5 acres, 156.5 of which are under cultivation and 21 wooded.

In May, 1966, Mr. Lemire moved his family and his herd (which had by then grown to 50 head of grade Holsteins and one registered purebred, classified "Excellent") to the new farm. The average yield of the herd was then 11,000 pounds of milk per cow, with B.C.A. ratings of +3.5 for milk and +3.5 for fat.

#### The key to success: excellent management and persistent daily effort

For our winner, 1966 was a real turning point. "Micheret", with its 156.5 acres under cultivation, enabled him to maximize his efforts to improve the quality of his herd and to obtain better crop yields for his cattle feed. The means he used were simply those which sound management is likely to suggest to all conscientious producers, namely: artificial insemination, herd testing and type classification, balanced feeding of each cow in the herd according to her yield and individual needs, severe selection, careful bookkeeping (Gera<sup>1</sup>), good soil drainage, rational use of fertilizers (36 tons in 1976), and adequate farm machinery.

One has only to talk with Mr. Lemire for a few minutes to realize that he knows thoroughly every cow in his herd and that he is able to determine accurately each one's needs thanks to such aids as the herd management dial, individual fertility cards for each animal, and the R.O.P. feed records. He also uses semen from bulls at the Quebec Artificial

<sup>1</sup>GERA: "Groupes d'études de la rentabilité agricole", i.e. farm profit and loss study groups.



For Michel and Lise Lemire the key to success in the dairy industry is excellent management and daily effort.

Breeding Centre for 98 per cent of the matings on his farm, and R.O.P. testing to help improve the herd's milk production. The Dairy Herd Management Service of the Coopérative fédérée du Quebec has also been helpful to Mr. Lemire in providing fodder analysis to assist him in adequately supplementing the feed ration for each cow.

During the past 10 years, Michel and Lise Lemire have certainly spared no effort to improve the yield of their dairy herd. At the end of 1975, their enterprise comprised 100 head of registered Holsteins, 42 of which were milking cows producing an average of 15,500 pounds of milk per year with average B.C.A.'s of 3.7 for milk and 3.7 for fat. As previously stated, all of these cows are registered purebred Holsteins which, in 1975, were classified as follows: 1 Excellent, 24 Very Good, 18 Good Plus and 1 Good.

It should be pointed out that "Micheret" is self-sufficient for 75 per cent of its livestock feed. In fact, during the last three years, the farm has yielded 3.2 tons of grain corn per acre and an average of 16 to 18 tons of silage per acre. In 1976, despite extensive frost damage, Michel Lemire has already harvested, from two cuttings, a total of 4 tons

of mixed hay (alfalfa and clover) and 2.7 tons of alfalfa.

Moreover, for almost five years now, Mr. Lemire has been leasing 35 acres of land at Baieville where each summer he sends his young replacement cattle to graze.

**Michel Lemire: an active man who believes in the farm cooperative system**

Today, Michel Lemire is a successful man with a firmly-established reputation as a dairy producer. In fact, during the past few years he has sold approximately 50 head of cattle for export to Belgium, Italy, France, Germany, Tunisia, Trinidad, Cuba, Mexico and, most recently, to Japan.

He owes this success to his wife, Lise, who has supported, helped, and encouraged him right from the start; his children Gloria, Mathieu, Carmen, Pascal, Georges and even Martial, who help him out as much as they can; and to Yves Côté, his hired man for the past three years. He owes it also to his constant desire for improvement and to his exceptional drive. To illustrate these two traits, we would like to point out that in 1973 Mr. Lemire visited France in connection with a study program on breeding and the dairy industry sponsored by the "Office Franco-

Quebecois", and that in 1976 "Michelet" welcomed over 4,000 persons on the occasion of the annual picnic of the Quebec Holstein Association.

A very active person, Mr. Lemire is a member of the Union des Producteurs Agricoles (U.P.A.), the St. Zéphirin Credit Union, the Agricultural Society of Yamaska, and the St. Zéphirin branch of GERA. However, since 1961 he has become best known in the agricultural cooperative field. From 1971 to 1975 he was President of the Lac St. Pierre Agricultural Cooperative and he is now President of the Granby Agricultural Cooperative and an executive member of the Coopérative fédérée du Quebec. His aim is to convince Quebec farmers of the need to combine their efforts to ensure better marketing of their products. We have every reason to believe that, given his determination and faith in the cooperative ideal, Michel Lemire will succeed in this endeavour.

This was the 87th Agricultural Merit Competition. Altogether 70 farmers participated this year. Their farms were in the counties of Arthabaska, Bagot, Compton, Drummond, Iberville, Johnson, Missisquoi, Nicolet, Richelieu, Rouville, St. Hyacinthe, Stansted, Wolfe, Yamaska, and Shefford.



## Family Farming Enterprise Honoured

**Vermette and Sons — Silver Medal Winners in the 1976**

**Agricultural Merit Competition**

**by Chantal Roy**

In Quebec, the end of summer has always ushered in the harvest season and a sense of accomplishment, and the satisfaction that goes with it. For Jean-Paul Vermette and his sons the satisfaction has been doubled this year by their pride in winning the silver medal in the Agricultural Merit Competition. This family farming enterprise has distinguished itself in swine raising and it is as a team that Mr. Vermette and his four sons of Saint-Simon in Bagot County tell their story.

The history of the enterprise begins with Mr. Vermette himself, who was born on this farm. With a flash of pride in his eye he declares that he has never worked anywhere else. In 1944 he acquired a piece of land three linear arpents wide by 30 long. At this time he had not yet reached the specialization stage and it was with three cows, three

sows, 12 hens, and two horses that he started farming. That year was also an important one for Mr. Vermette because it was then that he married the young lady who was to help him during the years to come and present him with a daughter and with five sons, four of whom now share with him in this prosperous farming corporation. It was in 1944, too, that Mr. and Mrs. Vermette started a tomato and corn canning enterprise which they continued to operate until 1948. Mrs. Vermette emphasizes that everything was done by hand from handling and preparing the vegetables to filling the cans, which were then sealed automatically. During that period the Vermettes also grew some grain, which they sold. They gradually increased their acreage. In 1961 Mr. Vermette bought 75 arpents

from a neighbour; in 1962 he added another 58 arpents and in 1973 a further 85, and today he rents an additional 195.

Hand in hand with this increase in the size of their farm, they built up their swine enterprise. Why this interest in hog production? Mr. Vermette shrugs his shoulders and says, "I've always liked that". In 1960 and 1961, I worked for a neighbour who had 12,000 pigs and it interested me." Even before that, by 1951, Mr. Vermette himself had expanded his own herd of pigs and had housing for 100. In 1961 he remodelled his barn to house 24 dairy cows and then, in 1970, he launched out to raise 700 hogs after having built a piggery and a 60 x 20 foot silo to store high-moisture corn. In 1973, he built a piggery for 1,000 hogs, sold his dairy herd and turned the barn into a two-storey farrowing

building. Since then there have been no cows on his farm. Another silo, measuring 72 feet x 20 feet, was built in 1974 to store high-moisture corn, and the completion of another farrowing building for 200 was scheduled for 1975, bringing the swine herd up to its present strength of 300 sows, and 2,000 hogs being raised for market.

And the farming corporation? The four boys smile and Mr. Vermette says, "Réjean wanted to work on the farm and settle down on it. But you need some education and you have to show that you are serious." (Mr. Vermette is obviously a wise man who wanted his son to prove his mettle.) Réjean had already bought 10 sows in 1969 and by 1972 he had 30 and was showing plenty of natural aptitude. Starting in 1970, Michel and Yvon rented a farm which they operated on their own account and on which they grew grain to sell to their father. The Vermettes were really in business! Michel, by then a qualified farm machinery technician, was an extra asset to the team. On the first of May 1972, they went into business together and Denis, who had taken the dairy technology course, joined the group in October 1975. It need hardly be said that these men had the love of the soil in their blood, were not afraid of hard work, and had served their apprenticeship to their calling in a good school.

Since December, 1975, Mr. Vermette and the four sons have operated as an officially constituted farming corporation. What about the friction and differences that may arise in such an association? "Well, we're shareholders and problems are worked

out as they would be in a company." They actually seem rather surprised at such a question. Besides, the row of four substantial houses bespeak the concord that reigns in the enterprise.

Three of the young wives work outside the farm and the fourth is bringing up her little daughter. This association has a lot of advantages. The work is shared evenly and there is no need to go looking for outside help at harvest time. There is a chance to take a rest occasionally, too. Since 1972, two of the men have always had the weekend free and each of them is entitled to a number of days holiday a year—which is very welcome in an occupation as demanding as farming.

All the land is used to grow corn, so that the Vermettes are self-sufficient in pig feed except for meal for the sows. The finished hogs are sold to the abattoir at Saint-Valérien. This type of operation is very paying because it eliminates the middlemen; the piglets and the grain corn for finishing them are produced right on the farm.

As in any prosperous enterprise there are expansion projects. Another piggery for 1,250 head is to be built immediately containing a feed milling unit to grind feed for all the pigs. As to problems, Michel answers spontaneously, "It's time we're short of." With regard to market fluctuations, the Vermettes are rather realistic: the hog market is quite unstable but to some extent you can live with this situation, especially if you can keep production costs down by being self-sufficient. Disease is

rare among their pigs, which are hybrids of two pure breeds. These animals also have a higher feed conversion rate.

Mrs. Vermette plays an important role as bookkeeper under her husband's supervision and with the occasional help from an accountant. In addition, because the sons' wives work outside the farm during the day, it is their mother-in-law who prepares dinner for the men. She also tends the farm grounds and grows a small vegetable garden each summer. As a member of the AFEAS, she held the position of councillor until just recently.

From the trophies displayed in the home, it is evident that the Vermette family excels in sports, namely lawn bowling, hockey, basketball, and even stock-car racing.

Mr. Vermette also leads a rather active community life. He is past president of the local U.P.A. and administrator of the Hog Producers' Syndicate. He gave up his position with the U.P.A. at the beginning of 1976 when he was appointed President of the Saint-Hyacinthe Federation of the Hog Producers' Syndicate, whose members produce 25 per cent of the hogs sold in Quebec. As well, he has served as School Board member, President of the Saint-Simon lawn bowling club, and director of the Saint-Hyacinthe Regional Lawn Bowling League.

But no one is completely spared setbacks. It was with shock and consternation that Rejean, who had remained home alone one October Sunday last year, saw the silo which had just been built the day before collapse before his eyes. It was therefore

# This Month with the



## ACWW Conference

Any QWI member planning to attend the ACWW Conference in Kenya should get in touch with QWI President, Miss Edna Smith, as soon as possible for information re forms, fees, etc. Unfortunately, the forms were delayed in the mail; nevertheless, the completed forms together with a cheque or money order for £15 sterling must reach the London office by November 30. If you plan to make your own arrangements for attending the Conference, the deadline will be April 30.

## QWI at the Plowing Matches

At the Canadian National and Provincial Plowing Matches, held at Macdonald College September 23-25, the Quebec Farmers' Association and Quebec Women's Institutes jointly sponsored a booth. Due to our President's unavoidable absence, I was asked to represent the QWI Executive for the three days. Our 2nd Vice-President, Mrs. Walter Kilgour, spent Saturday at the booth.

My enthusiasm for the project grew as the train pulled into the station at Ste. Anne de Bellevue

and the site of the Plowing Matches came into view with many of the farm machinery displays and tents already in place.

The spot chosen for the QFA-QWI tent was ideal — in the centre of all the activity with the plowing fields to the front and side, the displays around us, the large, striped tent next door with programs of interest to women, which was sponsored by the Quebec Ministry of Agriculture, the farm demonstrations, and the bus stop for tours close by.

Boys from the Diploma Program set up and dismantled the tent, which stood out with the banners of the QFA and QWI stretched across it.

As the Macdonald Fall Royal coincided with the Plowing Matches, there were many displays and demonstrations set up on the grounds, at the College Farm, and in the buildings on campus.

Cold fingers finally forced Joan Boara of the West Island branch to set aside her demonstration of macramé for the warmer task of pouring coffee. However, any other difficulties experienced by the cold, wind, rain, and mud were

readily overcome by the warm comradeship that was evidenced in the booth and on the grounds. The steaming urns did much to dispel the cold, as coffee and doughnuts were served to the visitors and members alike.

Before leaving for holidays, Mrs. Jas. Robertson made the preliminary arrangements for the three-day event. The refreshments and activities of the QWI were then co-ordinated by our Citizenship Convener, Mrs. R. French. Institute members from Chateauguay-Huntingdon, Argenteuil and Baldwin-Cartier Counties took turns manning the refreshment counter, while our cooperative secretary was on hand with her car to run errands.

Members from the regional societies of the QFA along with the QWI were on hand to explain the purpose of the two organizations and to hand out pamphlets pertaining to the work. Visitors came from across Canada as there were contestants in the matches from seven provinces.

On Friday evening the Vice-Principal of the College gave a reception for the Canadian and Provincial Matches to which re-

(Continued from page 15)  
necessary to salvage the 650 pounds of shelled corn and include plans for the reconstruction of the silo with those for a new piggery and wheat mill.

But life is not just a series of setbacks. At the beginning of this past summer, Mr. and Mrs. Vermette along with several other farmers, spent two weeks in Brittany as part of an exchange program with Britons who had

previously visited the Saint-Hyacinthe region. On their tour they learned that this part of France enjoys a longer growing season but that there are fewer and smaller farming areas. Enterprises operate on a small scale and self-supply is not as widespread as it is in Quebec.

What about the future of the Quebec farmer? Mr. Vermette is hopeful and maintains that the only way to establish oneself

in farming in the future is to group together and consolidate efforts and capital.

With over 450 acres under cultivation and 31,000 square feet of building space (soon to be increased to 41,000 square feet with planned improvements), the future of the Vermette enterprise is promising indeed. We can very well modify an old saying and state: "A family who invest together, stay together."

Douglastown WI members and the van they rented to take them to the P.E.I. convention.

representatives of the QWI were invited. At this time the prizes and trophies for the day were presented to the contestants.

The booth was a success — but success cannot be counted in dollars and cents. It was a time of getting to know each other better — among ourselves and with the public. A closer fellowship sprang up between the two organizations and with the different departments of Macdonald College. There is an increased awareness of the aims of each group involved.

The QWI is grateful for all the assistance given by the Extension Department and staff of Macdonald College.

I can personally speak for the warm hospitality accorded me, even to being provided with warm socks and boots to cope with the uncooperative weather.

Mrs. S. Parker, 3rd Vice-President, Q.W.I.

### A Trip to Remember

At 4:40 a.m. on June 20, 1976, with all 12 passengers on board our rented van, the ladies from Douglastown WI took off for the Convention at P.E.I. Our only problem was that the gas gauge didn't work and we ran out of gas at Hope Town. A kind service station attendant didn't mind being aroused out of his bed to serve us and send us on our way again. Reaching the ferry as it was about to cross to Dalhousie, we decided to take it and, with no further mishaps, we managed to catch the six p.m. ferry to the Island. After checking in at the York Motel and freshening up, we set out to have our evening meal.

We met many people from all across Canada at the Convention. The highlight of our trip was P.E.I. Day. There were 11 buses to take us to tour the Island, each bus with a guide.



Our bus took us to Green Gables and Woodleigh Replicas, then on to Murray River where we were served a delicious luncheon by the ladies of that WI branch. We were also presented with souvenirs of scallop shells and napkins with Lady Slipper emblems on them. Our next stop was at Murray Harbour where we toured the Lobster Factory and their handicraft shop. That evening we thoroughly enjoyed the performance of "Anne of Green Gables" at Confederation Centre.

Friday morning we caught the six a.m. ferry on our homeward journey. With a singsong on our way, time passed quickly and we arrived home at 7 p.m. tired but happy. Many thanks to the wonderful people we met and to those who helped to make our trip one to remember with great pleasure.

### Compton County Members Conference

On Wednesday, September 15, **Compton County** Women's Institutes were hostesses for a Members Conference at the Bury Town Hall. Megantic and Quebec Counties were invited as our guests; unfortunately Quebec County had to send their regrets but six members came from Megantic, making a total of about 60 members present.

Upon arrival at 10 a.m., members were served coffee and doughnuts and each received a name plate. The meeting was opened with the Mary Stewart Collect. Mrs. Wells Coates, QWI 1st Vice President, and Mrs. Sterling

Parker, QWI 3rd. Vice President, presided. Mrs. Coates extended a welcome to all, and Mrs. Parker expressed her pleasure in being able to be present.

Members were divided into five study groups to discuss and consider four specified questions. Each group appointed a secretary to take notes on the discussions which lasted until noon when, after the WI Grace, a delicious casserole dinner was enjoyed.

When the meeting reconvened a scrambled word contest was held under the direction of Mrs. Flora McIntyre, Compton County Secretary. Mrs. Coates then took great pleasure in presenting an Abbie Pritchard throw to Mrs. Elsie Morrison, who has been a faithful member of Bury for many years. Although Mrs. Morrison had been taken completely by surprise, she gracefully expressed her appreciation of such a lovely gift.

Mrs. Coates urged members to go over their new Hand Books carefully as much time and effort went into their revision. The forms in them are samples only and are **not** to be cut out and used. She urged members to send in resolutions as she stressed that community matters are WI concern.

Mrs. Parker emphasized the link between the QWI, the FWIC, and the ACWW. On joining the WI a member automatically belongs to all three and may buy and wear three different pins. Twenty-five-and 50-year pins are

given by the branch as an honour. The number of years to be eligible for one of these pins do not have to be consecutive. Life Memberships are also given as an honour. QWI pens are still available, with a good supply on hand. There is also a supply of QWI crests.

Mrs. Parker urged members to support the ACWW-UNESCO Gift Coupon Project and the Nutrition Education Fund which help to educate people in other countries, also the Quebec Service Fund which sponsors Members Conferences, competition prizes, and other worthy projects.

Mrs. Coates reminded us of the constant need for Pennies for Friendship as they finance the London office of the ACWW, as well as many other worthwhile endeavours. Members were reminded that minutes of the board meetings must be read in full and subscriptions for Federated News need to be in by December 1.

The reports of the study session were read and discussed. (Answers to these and other questions at Members Conferences will, we hope, be summarized and appear in a later Journal.)

Miss Marion Ord, Compton County President voiced her thanks to all who had come to make it such a successful day. She especially thanked the Bury branch for all their work in serving the food.

The County Treasurer, Mrs. Donald Clark picked up the collection of Pennies for Friendship, realizing a generous amount.

Mrs. Margaret Dempsey, on behalf of Megantic County WI, thanked the hostess county for their hospitality and a most pleasant day.

With Mrs. Doug Mackay at the piano, the meeting closed with the singing of the Hymn of All Nations and God Save the Queen. Before leaving for home tea and sweetbreads were served.

### A Woman Who Cares

At about 9:30 one evening during Convention the then Home Economics Convener, Miss Viola Moranville of Beebe branch in Stanstead County, finally found time in a day that began before seven to have a "taped" conversation. It was a wonderful experience, and I only wish space permitted our using it in its entirety. Miss Moranville stressed that her greatest pleasure was in working with and for "My boys . . . they were all my boys" during World War II. Coming second in her heart, as I feel WI does, is no disgrace. In this the United States bicentennial year, I cannot think of anything more appropriate for the WI pages than a conversation with a member who lives in a border town and for whom there are no boundaries; Viola Moranville is "at home" in either country.

Hazel M. Clarke.

### World War II

During the second World War I did a great deal of voluntary work with the military. I was in Melbourne, Florida, because of my Dad's health. I am very proud of the wonderful memories that I have of when I worked with the boys. It was an experience that I wouldn't have missed for the world. They were fantastic. I was either sis, or mom to all of them. They didn't know any other name, perhaps Sis Vi. I was in charge of dances, and that was a lot of fun. I also tried to comfort the boys when they got "Dear John" letters from home. I got a lot of calls to sick bay. I helped with accident cases—our doctor discovered that I could face things very well at the time it was needed. (Of course, he didn't know I broke down and went all to pieces three days later.) I helped with some pretty rugged things because they were short of nurses.

### "I love music"

I am not a good musician, but I love music and have played most

of my life. I am organist in the church and for the local chapter of the Eastern Star. I seem to be a joiner. I adore bridge but I seem to get into everything that's going on, and I think I have more fun than anybody else.

### "Doing for others . . ."

The more you give of yourself, the more comes back to you in some way. That is my philosophy in life. Have a broad shoulder for someone. Don't be afraid to let a little bit of dust gather in your house if you can help somebody else. The dust will wait for you, but some of these people perhaps can't wait. There are times when you have to help to the point where you have given so much of yourself that there's not much left of you for about 24 hours, but when you come back you're stronger than you were before.

Everybody can help in their own way, and each one of us needs a helping hand in one way or another sometime during life. It may be just a cheery word or something else. Beebe is a unique little town. Fundamentally the business is granite. We have about 200 granite quarries in the area and one of the largest finishing sheds under one roof in the world. There are always problems when you have this type of work. People don't bother you too much; everybody is friendly, but if you have a problem or there's a sorrow in the family, you never have to ask for help. People that you hardly ever see will be at your door.

I will cover all ladies organizations when I say this, which, of course, includes the WI. If there is a possibility of going into a veteran's hospital and doing something—even if it isn't any more than telling a patient how beautiful the trees are, that the flowers are in bloom, or that the frost is on the pumpkin and the maple trees are turning beautiful autumn colours. There are so many people in these hospitals that are forgotten. I don't think anyone

knows what it means for these men who are badly disabled. Members will get joy themselves from these visits because the men will respond so nicely; they are so appreciative of any little thing that you can do for them. We should go to Senior Citizens' homes. There are many of these citizens that need help in writing letters, reading the newspapers. Just take one little flower—just show that you care.

#### "On air...."

When WIKE in Newport first opened, 27 years ago, they asked our local branch of the WI if they would like to contribute something to the opening program. We had an elderly gentleman in our area who had composed quite a bit of music, and he said he would sing if I would accompany him. That was my beginning as an Institute member in broadcasting. Every broadcast that I have done since then has been done in the name of the WI. I've done everything from growing bonsai trees to hypnotism to edible weeds, but I bring in something about the Institute each time. I have around 23 minutes and have been on 47.

I am supposed to be on the air once a month but sometimes I get a call saying someone has cancelled out and I may have the time. Occasionally I am there three times a month.

I made one broadcast in Newport on rose hips and gave about three recipes. Then I was asked to do it on Sherbrooke CKTS, and while I was on the air people began telephoning in for the recipes, particularly the rose hip jam. I must have sent out about 50 letters in less than a week on that.

We are very fortunate to have this air time. WIKE isn't a big station but it covers quite a distance. It depends on the area but I strongly feel other counties could get air time if they approached the manager in the right way. I know that one station

has cut off all WI broadcasts and many, many people are very unhappy about it.

#### "On being a WI member...."

I am particularly proud of being an Institute member, and I think that anyone who is in the WI should feel that it is a privilege. There isn't a day that you can't learn something. Living on the border as I do, I have done demonstrating of weaving and other handicrafts on the American side. I always tell them that I am an Institute member, and that I want to be known as a representative of the Women's Institute.

Yes, I find that younger women are joining, and I think that's wonderful. We have a few new members in our branch that are showing a lot of interest. They joined because their mothers had been members and had told them of the wonderful things that were done, and they were carrying on in their mother's memory. Now they are getting enough out of it so that it has become their own thing. There has got to be young people brought in in order to carry on. It has to be. You just can't give anything up that is as wonderful as WI. It's world-wide.

#### "On Convention, handicrafts and things...."

I have been coming to Convention for years. I have been a branch delegate and a County President. At the present time I am Home Economics Convener in the branch and the County and Secretary in the County. I am also Secretary in the Stanstead Historical Society, an organization of which I am very proud. We have two museums, one of which is in Beebe. I help to plan the tours that we have each fall.

I have taught handicrafts. I have done ceramics. I like to dabble with many things but I am not a perfectionist in any of them. I also judge, but will not judge if I know any of the articles that are going in to the competition,

I was disappointed in our small handicraft showing this year, but I fully and sincerely believe that it is an apathetic year and not just in WI. So many people say, why do we bother, or we have not had the time. You can make time. The people that say they have not got any time are the people that usually live alone—it least that is the way I find it. The reports I received showed many things that members did, but everything was on a smaller scale. Those that have come in to see the exhibit have remarked that there's not nearly as many things here as before. And I said, that's right and there's no one in the world to blame but Institute members. They've got the talent, they have plenty of time if they'll take the time, and it's always the busiest person that can do these things. Surely with the beginning of '77 it's going to change. It has to. My outlook in life always has been that if I am a real sick person today, I expect to be all right tomorrow and I expect everything is going to work that way. Sometimes it takes a few tomorrows but I still feel it is going to work out. It has to because I think there's a great future for the Women's Institutes.

It has been a delight to work with Miss Auger and it's an education that you can't acquire in any other way. With everything she does she is teaching you, not consciously, but if you are willing to learn, every moment that you spend with her is enhancing your education. It has been a great privilege to be associated with her.

I think the new Convener is going to have a wonderful time and will get a lot of help from the rest of us. Everyone should dig in and help. It is work, but so is anything else if you want to make a success of it—I don't care what it is. If she has half as much fun as I have had, she'll be very happy, I know that.

**Dear W. I. Members:**

This report is being prepared on a foggy morning in late September with a brisk breeze blowing from Chaleur Bay. I can see a lone fisherman out there. But by the time this is in print, we will find ourselves in November with shorter days and a hint of winter in the air. Fall fairs and harvest suppers will be just pleasant memories. The Canadian National and Quebec Provincial Plowing Matches will have been held at Macdonald College. These really are an important aspect of rural life. We will have celebrated Thanksgiving with the usual family reunions and church services. Nor will Remembrance Day be forgotten; some of us may pause briefly in memory of a tall clear-eyed youth who bravely waved good-bye. But November will be busy and interesting for many branches will be making plans for Christmas.

Some roll calls submitted were: **Huntingdon**, give your measurements in metric system; **Hemmingford**, name a vegetable and tell how to prepare it; **Granby-Hill** tell something important about the summer; **Douglastown**, each member who attended the P.E.I. Conference, recall an experience; **Granby-Hill**, a health food recipe; **Cowansville** members stated what they found good or bad about T.V.; **Fordyce**, each member named her favourite activity and why she enjoyed it; **Jerusalem-Bethany**, tell how you met your husband and how many years you have been married; **Frontier**, what driving faults in others annoy you most; **Pioneer**, name a dedicated teacher.

**Granby-Hill** welcomed a new member, also heard an interesting report by their treasurer on her trip to the FWIC Convention where she was a voting delegate. Knitted articles were handed in at **Waterloo-Warden** for CanSave.

The Agriculture Convener in **Granby West** reported on the finding of a rose bush in England in an abbey wall that was sealed

in 1120. **Abbotsford** prepared 21 handi bags valued at \$4.50 each for CanSave. A surprise party was held for Miss Muriel Marshall's 88th birthday. The branch also entertained 75 members and staff from the Salvation Army. **Dewittville** planned the operation of a dining hall at Huntingdon Fair. **Howick's** meeting took the form of a social gathering at Walshaven Apartments for senior citizens in Ormstown. The program consisted of games, contests, music, and visiting followed by lunch prepared by WI ladies. **Huntingdon** held a contest in which questions asked in English were answered in French.

An apron contest was held at Brompton Road with Mrs. D. Hadenko winning first prize and Mrs. E. Decoteau second. **Milby** heard an interesting report from Mrs. J. Tarte, provincial delegate to FWIC Convention. She discussed Mrs. MacLean's address. An interesting article was read at **York** from Revue d'Histoire de la Gaspesie regarding the 50 years of Hotel Dieu and its staff. **Douglastown** made plans to dine out after the summer visitors have gone.

Mrs. Fulford and Mrs. Bowling gave interesting talks to their respective branches, **Cowansville** and **Fordyce**, on their trips to the Virgin Islands. At the semi-annual meeting of Missisquoi County it was decided that the annual meeting would be held in Dunham with **Dunham** branch as hostesses. Mrs. Lewis made a suggestion that members in each branch get together during the winter to do handicrafts to exhibit at the annual meeting. **Fordyce** branch is having new cook books printed, the work to be done by the students at St. Blaise School — one for the mentally retarded.

Two articles worthy of publication were read at the September meeting of **Dalesville-Louisa**. One was a warning regarding the use of glazed ceramics used for food and drinks. If the articles were not

properly kilned, the lead from the pottery could penetrate the glaze and cause food poisoning. The other article was advice to parents. Homes should be run by parents, not small monsters. Parents should not be afraid to say "No". At a meeting at **Arundel** the presentation of a mohair throw was made to their oldest member Mrs. J. A. Pollock, who is a 52-year WI member.

I had the opportunity to attend the 290th regular meeting of the **Marcil** branch in Bonaventure County. It was an interesting and well-conducted meeting. Roll Call was something you enjoy in the Women's Institutes. Some answers were: association with other women; the WI supports the schools; it stands for so much that is good in the community, school fairs and 4-H clubs. One lady said "I enjoy every aspect of it, especially the annual convention." Another lady said with a smile, "and I enjoy the fact that the President contacts each member before the meeting just to remind us about it." Monthly card parties were arranged for the fall and winter months. Excellent reports were given by each convener and plans made to entertain the County President, and a teacher, new to the area, at the next regular meeting.

It was a pleasure to meet Mrs. Cameron Dow of Port Daniel, a well-known Institute member. She was on the committee that started the Macdonald College Journal. I asked Mrs. Dow if she had a message for us. Her answer was, "the theme or heading that I chose for an address that I gave for the bi-annual federated conference years ago was 'think nationally and work nationally.' I still believe this to be true." She also said she was pleased to keep in touch with the WI and that she missed being able to attend meetings. So with Mrs. Dow's thoughts I shall close this report.

Mrs. Gladys C. Nugent  
Publicity Convener